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EASTERN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCER

OCI #0705/68  
15 April 1968Bulgaria Grants Large Credit to Tunisia

An agreement for \$35.5 million in Bulgarian credits to Tunisia and a one year renewal of the bilateral payments agreement were signed at the conclusion of Bulgarian Deputy Premier Luchezar Avramov's visit to Tunisia, according to an 11 April official announcement from Tunis. Specific details of the credit agreement were not released, but the US embassy in Tunis reports they will probably be used to buy mining and extraction equipment, for technical assistance in mining, and for construction of new buildings in Gafsa. The payments agreement calls for Tunisia to increase exports of triple superphosphates to Bulgaria, part of which will be paid for in convertible currency. [REDACTED]

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COMMENT: To date, this is the largest credit provided Tunisia by an Eastern European country. Moreover the payments agreement is highly unusual, coming at a time when the country is suffering from a lack of hard currency. The two agreements apparently are mutually beneficial: Bulgaria is reportedly constructing a triple superphosphate plant and was interested in a purchase agreement for phosphates, while Tunisia is anxious to improve and expand the country's extraction of phosphates. The credit is also indicative of Bulgaria's interest in expanding contacts outside the bloc.

Bulgarian Party Boss Zhivkov Will Visit Czechoslovakia

Later this month Zhivkov will lead a party-government delegation to Prague. A friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance treaty between the two countries may be renewed during the visit. [REDACTED]

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COMMENT: A segment of this broadcast is garbled and it is unclear whether negotiations will begin on the new agreement, or whether it will be concluded during the visit. The old treaty expires on 23 April and chances are a new pact will be signed. The treaty should provide an indication of how the Czechoslovaks view their relations with their East European allies, and may offer some insights about the future of Prague's relations with West Germany. It also may provide some clues as to whether official Czechoslovak attitudes toward NATO and "Western imperialists" have changed. [REDACTED]

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Poles Mention Gomulka's Fall Visit to France

A date and program for Gomulka's visit to France this fall will "probably be announced shortly by joint communiques," according to a public statement by the Polish Ambassador in Paris, Jan Druto. He made the remark during an 11 April press conference during which he defensively "clarified" the purges and the party struggle now going on in Poland. [REDACTED]

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COMMENT: Coming in the wake of government changes which appear to indicate that Gomulka may have won the first round with his hardline challengers, Druto's remark may be another reflection of Gomulka's confidence that he will be around to make the trip.

The visit, in return for De Gaulle's trip to Poland last September, has been rumored for nearly six months, but neither side had announced it publicly. In the past several weeks, however, the French press mentioned the possibility of the visit twice, apparently hoping to smoke out the Polish situation.

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NOTE: THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ABOVE REPRESENT  
ONLY THE ANALYSIS OF THE EE DIVISION

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